

## Benefits & Announcements

### WCT Pension Plan Q&A

On the second Wednesday of every month, a representative from the WCT Pension Administrator comes to Local 853's San Leandro office to answer your pension questions. Call 510-895-8853 or 800-400-1250 for an appointment.

### SIP 401(k) enrollment

Most Local 853 members are eligible for the SIP 401(k) Plan. If you are not yet enrolled, or wish to increase your pre-tax deferred amounts—check with your business agent, your company's HR department, or call 1-800-4-PRETAX [1-800-477-3829].

### Monthly meetings

Local 853's membership meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. They are held in the West Bay and East Bay:

- 2100 Merced St., San Leandro, or
  - 151 W. 20th Avenue, San Mateo, CA.
- Call 510-895-8853 to confirm location.

### Apply for James R. Hoffa Scholarship (2010-11)

**Deadline March 31, 2010**

The James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund awards scholarships annually to outstanding high school seniors. For eligibility criteria and an application, contact the Local 853 office or go on-line to:

[www.teamster.org/content/scholarships](http://www.teamster.org/content/scholarships)



## Members gear up at Organizer Bootcamp

Local 853 members helped pack Local 287's San Jose hall on Saturday, October 10 for a full-day Organizer's Bootcamp. The event is a traveling classroom that has been crisscrossing the nation with the goal of bringing 1,000 trained volunteers into Teamster organizing campaigns by the end of the year.

Not surprisingly, the attendance at Joint Council 7's spirited bootcamp was double that of any other held so far across the country. And if the enthusiasm and interest of the assembled rank-and-filers is any indication of the event's success, it would appear that lots of Northern California's non-union workers will soon become proud Teamster members.

Local 853 Secretary-Treasurer and Joint Council 7 President Rome Aloise opened the session by emphasizing the necessity of developing effective paid, and volunteer, organizers if we are to win organizing campaigns. Having been a Teamster organizer for 15 years before becoming a full time officer, Rome holds

a special place in his heart for the difficulty organizers face. He is committed to making sure the trained volunteers are actually used in organizing campaigns.

The IBT sent a crew of talented educators on the road with the Bootcamp; Claudia Galloway, IBT Senior Training Coordinator, Manny Valenzuela, IBT Western Region Organizing Coordinator, Kim Keller, Deputy Director of the IBT Organizing Department, Pilar Barton, Strategic Organizer for Joint Council 7 and Rudy Gonzalez, organizer for Teamsters Local 856. The energy, dedication and knowledge exhibited by this formidable line-up of organizers was inspiring.

The Bootcamp's message was clear; if we want the IBT to survive, we need involved members. Becoming a volunteer organizer, whether in local, regional or national campaigns, is one way members can make a significant impact. Aloise understands this and so do the Local 853 members who attended the event.

*by Terry Post, Bode Gravel*

## How is the economy impacting your life, and does being a union member help?



**Kirk Krause**  
Cemex

"We're watching our dollars and streamlining everything. A lot of people are getting laid off—the union is working to find solutions so it's not as bad. It's definitely better to have union representation."



**Phil Holzberger**  
Young's Market

"I'm going broke. My wife's not working and we have more debt. There's no work out there—there's only so much the union can do if there's no work.."



**Narin Sen**  
Berkeley Farms, Hayward

"I don't even go shopping anymore! If there wasn't a union, I'd be so stressed out. I know my job is more secure."



**Danilo Tobias**  
Young's Market

"Work is very slow. Some of my coworkers are unemployed. The union helps but it's all about the economy."



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*Local 853 – organizing and building a stronger union*

# *Happy Holidays*

*from the officers & staff of Local 853*

## *Executive Board*

Rome Aloise—Secretary-Treasurer  
Steve Mack—President  
John C. Becker, Sr.—Vice President  
Antonio Christian—Recording Secretary  
Robert Baker—Trustee  
Mike Furtado—Trustee

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Jennifer Casqueiro	Sue Watkins
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# CONNECTIONS

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December, 2009



## Tenth Annual Membership Appreciation Meeting is Biggest Yet

Saturday, November 7, 2009, marked the tenth anniversary of Teamsters Local 853's Annual Membership Appreciation Meeting. Ten years ago, 200 members attended. This year, there were more than 700.

Obviously, anytime 700 Teamsters show up for a union meeting, something special is about to happen. But, then again, Local 853 isn't your typical local and the Annual Membership Appreciation Meeting isn't your typical union meeting.

At 6 a.m., Local 853 officers, business representatives, staff and stewards arrived at San Leandro's John Muir Junior High School, blurry-eyed, clutching steaming cups of coffee, to set-up chairs and tables, hook-up the sound system and unload all the gifts and raffle prizes that make the annual meeting so popular. About 8 a.m., the morning calm was broken as the parking lot began to fill with cars, trucks and motorcycles—Local 853's members, anticipating another great event, were arriving.

Following registration, every member received a Local 853 shirt and a tote bag containing a coffee mug, water bottle, key ring and other items, all adorned with the Teamster logo, of course. That was just the start. Later, after the speeches, there would be a spirited raffle for TV's, ipods, DVD players, jackets, gift certificates, liquor (a new item this year) and sweatshirts.

Amid the wave of blue Teamster jackets were retirees, like former Local 853 Vice-Presidents Phil Tarantino and Pete Gemma, who showed up to touch base with old friends and co-workers, reminisce about past struggles and lend support to their union. "Rome has done a terrific job with this Local," Pete noted, understating the obvious, as he does so eloquently.

Following Local 853 Vice President John Becker's introduction of officers, staff and other notables to the crowd, Jack Peasley conducted a power point presentation about DRIVE (Democrat, Republican, Independent Voter Education), the IBT's political action committee. He stressed the need for members not only to join DRIVE, but to get active in changing laws in favor of labor



and protecting good labor laws that already exist. Brother Peasley noted, however, that, despite DRIVE's success, only about eight percent of all Teamsters are members.

San Leandro Mayor Anthony "Tony" Santos spoke to the membership about his family's proud labor background and his ongoing relationship with San Leandro-based Local 853. Mayor Santos predicted that union construction jobs could be created

immediately if stimulus money flowed directly from the federal government to the local level rather than going through the state level first. Mayor Santos received a loud burst of approval when he stressed the importance of keeping big non-union stores, like Wal-Mart, out of San Leandro.

Finally, Local 853 Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise was introduced, followed by a standing ovation from the appreciative members. Rome gave his annual "State of the Union" address, noting that, while we were assembled to celebrate Local 853, 1,000 members were currently out of work due to the struggling economy. Rome, who, since the last Membership Appreciation Meeting, has become President of Joint Council 7, and Western Region Vice-President, gave one of his best speeches, apparently energized by the large, enthusiastic turnout. According to Rome, the state of Local 853 is good as we continue to grow in strength, power and influence.

Following Rome's speech, the long awaited raffle took place, culminating in one very happy member winning a 50-inch TV and home theater system.

Local 853's 2009 Annual Appreciation Meeting was the biggest so far, adding credence to speculation that we would have to find a larger venue as the Local continues to grow. More impressive than the numbers was the pride and the energy the members brought with them. This was REAL pride and REAL energy; the kind of pride and energy that fuels the best Local in the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

By Terry Post, Steward, Bode Gravel

## Local's unity and strength bring hope in tough economy

By ROME ALOISE

This year sped by like a rocket. It seems like just yesterday that we were celebrating the election of President Obama and were looking forward to the positive changes to come from the new administration. As generally happens, we have had to temper our expectations over the course of the year.

Some good changes have been instituted that will help organized working people and their unions and we anticipate more in the future. But right now, much is on hold until some type of healthcare legislation is passed. Once that happens, Congress should move on to passing pension reform and the Employee Free Choice Act, two tangible advances for organized labor.

Here at Local 853, we are finishing the year on the high note of another successful membership appreciation meeting. More than 700 members attended the meeting, listened to how our union is doing, received a gift package, and many won prizes from the big raffle. These meetings grow every year and I appreciate all of the support and good will that happens on that day. I couldn't be prouder of our members!

All of this year's contracts have been settled without resorting to strike. Most were decent settlements with some economic increases, even in this underperforming economy. This hasn't been an easy feat. Almost every employer claimed economic distress, trying to take away our health and pension benefits and attempting to undermine what we have fought for.

### The value of unity

We prevail because of the cohesive nature of our Local; this includes our members who get involved in their union, our excellent and dedicated shop stewards, our business agents, elected officers and hard-working office staff. We simply join together for a common goal and get things done.

This is the secret. The employers try to drive a wedge between the members and their union, but they don't succeed. The fact that Local 853 has a reputation as a tough, honest and reasonable union gets us many valuable benefits without having to strike. The minute an employer senses that we have lost our unity, our willingness to fight, or our ability to be reasonable, they will try to drive us down. We can never forget how important unity is to all of us.

### Respected by IBT

The International Union has seen our success and tapped several of our staff and officers to serve on IBT committees and posts. President Steve Mack is Director of the International Industrial Trades Division; Recording Secretary Antonio Christian is the Director of the Human Rights Division; Business Agent Dennis Hart is the IBT's Western Region Brewery and Soft Drink Director; Business Agent Bo Morgan is Chairman of the ACA Panel; Business Agent Lou Valletta is Chairman of the Bakery Industry Committee; Business Agents Mike Amaral and Chuck Davis sit on the Communications Division Board.

This show of respect for the talent in our local union is good for us.

Our Local is well-positioned to utilize all the resources available to ensure that our members receive the best representation possible.

### Hoping for a better 2010

I hope that 2010 is a better year for all of our members. Even though the vast majority of our membership is working, many members have lost their jobs due to closures and layoffs. We have placed some, but not enough, and we are working with numerous employers to bring more work to Northern California. I'm hopeful that the economy turns around quickly and opens up possibilities for work for everyone in our local—truly making it a better New Year.

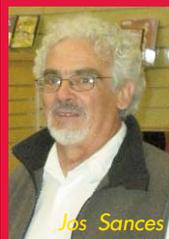
I wish all of our members and your families a happy holiday season and, hopefully, a more fruitful New Year.



## Teamsters Local 853

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## Local 853 member creates public art



Jos Sances

When the new Castro Valley Library was built, one Local 853 member had a large role in developing its character. Artist Jos Sances designed and created the library's mural entitled "The Free Form Flight of Life Long Learning."

The three-section, 750 square foot tile mural depicts Benjamin Franklin, the 'Father of American Libraries,' who, with children on their magic carpet books, fly over the landscape of Castro Valley.

Since 1990, Sances has designed and installed numerous murals, in tile and paint, across the Bay Area.



These include the 16th Street BART station, the main gate at the Oakland Coliseum, and others. Next to come is the new recreation center at Oakland's Ira Jenkins Park. As much as possible, he prefers to keep the "public" in public art, involving community members from youth to seniors in the process.

Sances is also the co-founder and works as the art director at Alliance Graphics, a Berkeley-based screen-printing and embroidery shop. "I love this work, but I always wanted to have the protections of a union contract. We've proven that we can do good work, pay and treat our employees decently, and still have a successful business."

# Scenes from the Membership Appreciation Meeting –



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1-The overflow crowd; 2-San Leandro Mayor Tony Santos; 3&4-Winners of second prize 32-inch flat screen TVs; 5-DRIVE organizers Chr along with Secretary-Treasurer Rome Aloise; 7-Recording Secretary Antonio Christian and Vice President John Becker; 8-Business Agent 12-Members; 13-Raffle-winning member picking out a t-shirt; 14-Business Agent Bob Strelor, retired Vice President Pete Gemma, Steward who work at Young's Market with Bas Alarcon and Mike Amaral.

# Tuesday, November 7, 2009



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Special thanks to Wayne Hobbs for photos

ch and Jack Peasley; 6-Picking the grand prize winner is Alex Alarcon, Friends; 9&10-Members (and future members); 11-IBT 853 office staff; Post; 15-Raffle winning members pick out electronic prize; 16-Members

## How are you impacted by the economy, and does the union help?



**Kimo Chun**  
**Certainteed**

"We've been getting less work hours. We work four days instead of six. The economy slows our pay and effects our benefits. The union has some programs that can help us."



**Robert Joaquin**  
**Primesource Building Products**

"I'm high enough on the seniority list so I haven't been laid off, but they do layoffs every other month. The cost of medical keeps going up. The union is the only way to bring America back to where it needs to be."



**Isidro Rodriguez**  
**Anixter**

"My company has laid off three guys so far and I'm having a hard time keeping money in my pocket. The union helps because the layoffs are by seniority and not by favoritism."



**Beverly Johnson**  
**Peerless Coffee**

"We're in negotiations right now and not making headway. It's a lean living lifestyle. Right now, we're taking steps backward, and that's where we'll be when the economy turns around. The union helps bring people together and creates unity and solidarity."



**Reggie Easterling**  
**KRS**

"The economy hasn't effected me because the union has kept me employed."